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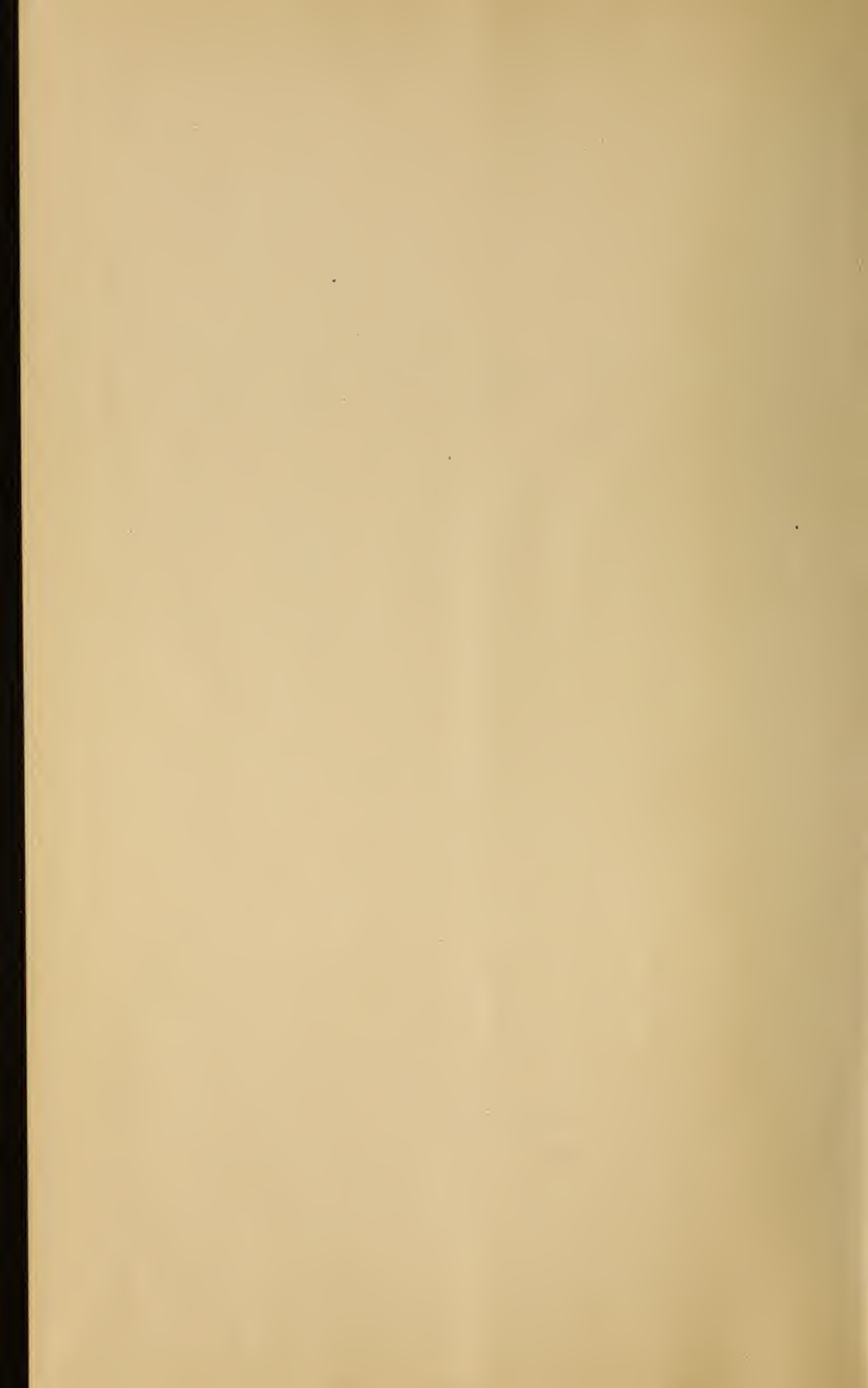
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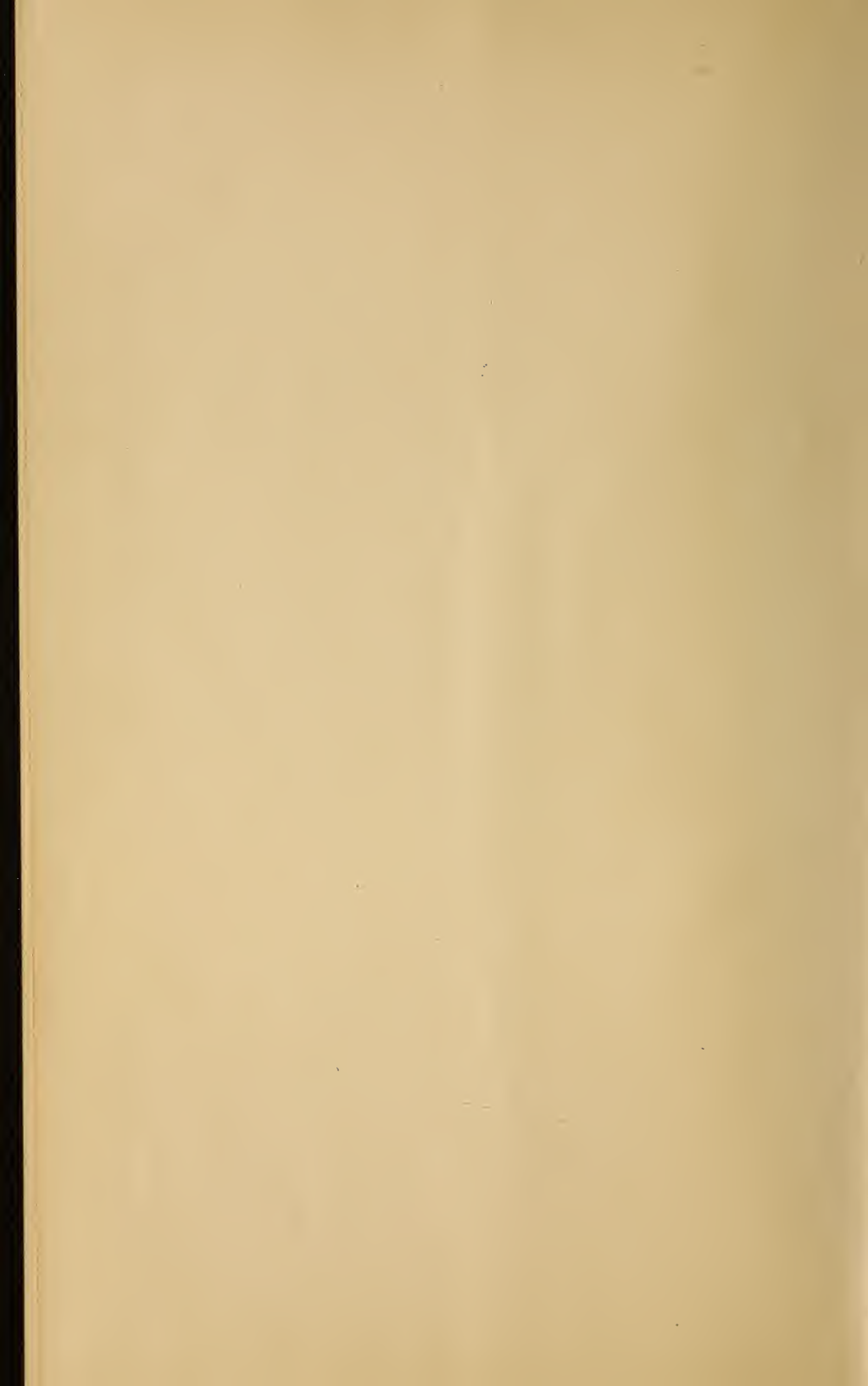


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MORDECAI M. NOAH.

Born, Philadelphia, July 19, 1785.—Died, New York City, March 22, 1851.

(From a Miniature in oil by the elder Jarvis, 1840.)

Kaufmann

April

1897

MORDECAI MANUEL NOAH

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

BY

SIMON WOLF



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INTRODUCTION.

"It is not necessary for a citizen of the United States to have his faith stamped on his forehead. The name of freeman is a sufficient passport."

Extract from Noah's "Travels in Europe and Africa."

I know of no more opportune time than the present to emphasize the good work done by American citizens of Jewish faith. When many of the leading newspapers of the country, both secular and religious, are more or less impairing the fundamental principles underlying our form of government and attacking the sacred rights of individual judgment and belief; when from the pulpit and rostrum are uttered words diametrically opposite to the spirit and genius of our institutions, and when persons clothed with the ermine degrade their judicial functions by opinions and decisions that breathe not of American spirit, but that of ancient feudalism and the middle ages, it is high time to show by an account of the services of an American citizen of the ancient faith, what he wrought and how he fought for the elevation of all men, which naturally included his own co-religionists. Much has been said and written about the subject of this sketch, but so far all is very incomplete, and, aside from the aim and object already quoted above, my hope is that some one having more time and greater facilities than myself will be impelled to write a book more complete and satisfactory, and thus furnish a biography of Noah, a story of patriotism, Judaism, heroism and philanthropy, all of which elements along with the characteristics of early

American journalism, were so preëminently embodied in the life and career of this illustrious American citizen.

For many of the incidents herein detailed I am indebted to Judge J. J. Noah, of Washington, the son of Major Noah, himself distinguished as a jurist and publicist of note. The portrait on the frontispiece of this sketch is from a miniature painted by the elder Jarvis, which is regarded as one of the most masterly productions of that artist.

SIMON WOLF.

WASHINGTON, D. C., January, 1897.

Mordecai Manuel Noah.

Mordecai Manuel Noah was born in Philadelphia, July 19, 1785, and died at New York City, March 22, 1851, in his sixty-sixth year. He was the eldest son of Manuel Mordecai Noah, of Charleston, South Carolina, a patriot of the Revolution, and Zipporah Phillips Noah, the daughter of Robert Phillips of Philadelphia, one of the most prominent patriots of the Revolutionary period. Robert Phillips was also the father of Zeligman Phillips and the grandfather of Henry M. and Altamont Phillips, distinguished as leading members of the Philadelphia bar. Henry M. Phillips was a representative in the Thirty-fifth Congress of the United States, which was the only political office ever held or accepted by him. Robert Phillips was also the grandfather of Commodore Uriah P. Levy, of the United States Navy. Mr. Noah's mother died at Charleston, South Carolina, and his father, in a fit of melancholia, consequent upon the death of his wife, disappeared without leaving a trace of whither he had gone and was mourned as dead.*

* One of the most dramatic of the many remarkable episodes of Major Noah's life, was his discovery of his missing father. Years after the latter's mysterious disappearance, when Major Noah was on his way to the Orient as United States Consul, he entered a restaurant in the city of Paris and was presently struck by the appearance of a soldier

Thereupon the friends of the family caused the boy Mordecai, who was then but ten years of age, to be sent to his grandfather at Philadelphia. Realizing that his grandfather had a large family to support and educate, and being ambitious to provide for himself, and not be a burden upon his relatives, the boy apprenticed himself, with the consent of his grandfather, to a carver and gilder to learn that handicraft, and for the remuneration of his board and clothes he contracted to serve his master until he arrived at the age of twenty-one.

Meantime he attended school for about a year, having among his classmates John and Stephen Decatur, of whom the latter subsequently attained eminent distinction as a commodore in the United States Navy, but unhappily died, in 1820, from the effects of a wound received in a duel with Commodore Barron. Entering at once upon his apprenticeship, young Noah developed an insatiate thirst for reading, and being unable to longer attend day-school, proceeded to educate himself at night at the old Franklin Library, then the rendezvous and resort of the great men of that era, whose habit it was to there meet and discuss the political issues of the day, Philadelphia being then the national capital. The library was free to all, and here the youth came every night, with the permission of his master, ensconcing himself in an obscure corner and reading with all possible interest and

in a distant corner of the room, dressed in the Continental uniform, blue coat, buff vest, short knee breeches, with his hair done up in a queue. Noah went up to him and greeted him in French; the stranger replied in English, saying, "Are you not an American?" Noah said he was. Then the other replied "So am I. My name is Manuel Mordecai Noah." "My God!" said the Major, "You are my father." And in this way father and son were again reunited.

avidity such books as commended themselves to his taste. The librarians all knew him and kindly assisted him in every way to advance his studies. The prominent men who assembled nightly at the library were not slow to notice this lad, and watching him closely, observed that he was reading a class of literature far beyond his years. They questioned him, and ascertaining that he was a grandson of the patriot Robert Phillips, and an indentured apprentice, took an especial interest in him, and through the personal efforts of the distinguished financier Robert Morris, procured the cancellation of his indentures and obtained for him an appointment as clerk in the Auditor's office, there being then but one auditor of the United States Treasury. Although a mere boy, he prepared the actuary tables of the eight per cent. loan, and in appreciation of his precocious efforts Congress voted him an extra compensation of \$100 for his services. It may here be remarked that in his subsequent days of influence and distinction Major Noah was wont to mention to his friends and contemporaries that he remembered no more happy moment of his younger life than when he was paid this sum at the Treasury in Spanish milled dollars, wrapped them in an old bandanna handkerchief, took them home, and presented them to his venerable grandfather.

Upon the removal of the national capital to Washington, young Noah resigned his clerkship and accepted employment as a reporter at the sessions of the Pennsylvania Legislature at Harrisburg. It was in this connection that he acquired his first experiences in journalism, in which he afterward marked his career as probably the ablest and most influential American editor of his generation. The teachings of his grandfather,

Robert Phillips, sank deeply into his heart and mind. He had been instructed that it was no less his first object in life than his constant duty to support the constitution and laws of his country, which guaranteed civil and religious liberty; that free America offered welcome to all who should come to her shores, and that here, and here alone, was to be found that refuge which the Jews, persecuted throughout ages, had so long hoped and prayed for. It is not surprising, therefore, that the boy grew to manhood with reverence for his country and its liberal institutions. With this sentiment implanted in every bone and fibre, intensely American in all his hopes and aspirations, he realized that being a Jew he would be called upon to turn aside, if possible, the lance points of religious prejudice, so largely dominant throughout the world. The reflex of this prejudice was unfortunately apparent even in the United States, and although the early colonial Jews were undoubtedly all patriots,* and contributed their efforts and their means freely and indeed lavishly to aid the colonies in their struggle for independence, serving in the Revolutionary army and mingling their blood with that of their compatriots on many a hard-fought field, nevertheless, the inexplicable tide of religious prejudice was not thereby checked, but has flown on in currents more or less violent, even up to the present time. A few years prior to the War of 1812, during the exciting times when Great Britain claimed and enforced the right of search, which was submitted to by our people for quite a period, not, however, without protest, young Noah returned to Charleston, S. C., then the

* This I have amply shown in the book entitled "The American Jew as Patriot, Soldier and Citizen," 1895, Phila., Levytype Co.

largest and wealthiest seaport of the country. He was surprised to find that the mercantile community of that city was averse to war with Great Britain because of its embargo upon commerce, and that those patriots who were ready to risk their lives for the honor and standing of their country were sadly in the minority. He at once entered the political arena as an advocate of war and the maintenance, at all hazards, of American rights on the high seas, and his vigorous and patriotic communications to the Charleston press over the signature of "Muley Malack," in which he denounced the craven spirit of those who would sacrifice the honor of their country and the liberty of its citizens to the mere greed of money, and advocated war in maintenance of American liberty and independence among the nations of the earth, brought young Noah into conspicuous prominence. As a consequence of his activity in this cause he became particularly obnoxious to the dominant element, through the influence and machinations of which quite a number of advocates of war with Great Britain had been driven out or practically assassinated through the "code duello." He spoke fearlessly and eloquently from the stump and rostrum, and received insults innumerable, which he resented on all occasions. Various attempts were made to sacrifice him to the duello, and indeed, to make away with him, but he escaped them all, and it finally became understood and accepted that at all times and in any way he was ready to fight for his principles. Three duels, in one of which he killed his opponent, were sufficient to give him the reputation of a man of courage, and thereafter his enemies hesitated to attack him. His advocacy, in conjunction with that of other brave and earnest South Carolinians, of a policy of resistance against Great Britain,

created a revolution in public sentiment, and South Carolina was finally carried in favor of the proposed war.

In the fall of 1812 President Madison appointed Major Noah Consul of the United States at Riga, Russia, then the most important commercial port on the Baltic Sea. This preferment being declined by Noah, he was appointed, in 1813, Consul at Tunis, with a special mission to Algiers. He was then but twenty-eight years of age. The vessel in which he embarked at Charleston, S. C., was captured in the British Channel by an English warship on the night of July 3, 1813, and he was detained several weeks as a prisoner of war. In view, however, of his diplomatic capacity he was released and ordered out of the country. The commanding officer of the ship which captured him, Sir Thomas Staines, had been stationed, before the war, near New York, and was familiar with American affairs. On the morning after the capture he approached Major Noah, saying that he remembered that the Fourth of July, the natal day of American independence, was dear to every American heart, and expressing his great regret that the Major was then a prisoner on an enemy's vessel. "I have occasion," said Sir Thomas Staines, "to leave the ship. Here are the musicians, and my cabin is at your disposal. I have ordered a stoup of wine to be broached for your men. Enjoy yourselves and celebrate the Fourth of July with perfect freedom."

This gallant act has never before been publicly recorded. The American prisoners celebrated the Fourth of July under the auspices of their captor, and the name of the gallant Sir Thomas Staines should be handed down to American posterity and engrossed in American history with all honor and respect. When Major Noah was con-

fined in the English prison at Portsmouth, where the American prisoners were immured, he brought his compatriots the first news of the capture of the Chesapeake and the tragic death of the heroic Lawrence, who, with his last breath, uttered the words that have made him immortal in American history, "Don't give up the ship!" Great stalwart Americans fell upon each other's necks and wept like children at hearing this ill news. "Thank God," said they, "Lawrence died like a hero and there was no loss of honor."

Proceeding by the way of Spain to his post of duty at Tunis, Major Noah was soon engaged in the work for which he was specially commissioned, to ransom the American prisoners then held in slavery by the Algerians. The negotiations were protracted, difficult and tedious, but success finally attended his efforts, and he had the pleasure and satisfaction of freeing his fellow-citizens from the galling yoke of Algerian slavery. At the same time, however, he was accused of exceeding his instructions through having ransomed more enslaved Americans than his letter of instructions warranted. He resented this charge, asserting that the liberty of an American citizen could not be measured by a mere money or verbal limitation, and that it was his duty to free every American thus held regardless of such limitations. His political enemies at home attacked him mercilessly, and his drafts for the moneys expended for ransom were permitted to go to protest. He was finally recalled upon the miserable pretext that, being a Jew, his religion was regarded as incompatible with his consular position at Tunis. Here he met Commodore Stephen Decatur for the first time since they were schoolmates together at Philadelphia, and it so happened that Decatur presented

him with his letter of recall without knowing its contents. Major Noah's vindication, however, was thorough and complete; his action in ransoming the American captives in Algiers formed the subject of exciting discussions in Congress and was approved by his countrymen. Finally, his drafts were honored, and a balance of nearly \$13,000 declared in his favor. It need hardly be remarked that the pretext given for Major Noah's recall was and remains a blot upon the history of American civilization.*

Major Noah was greatly respected by his diplomatic associates who represented other nations in Tunis. On one occasion the Consul of Germany was set upon and attacked by a detachment of Janizaries, led by a son of the Bey. He fled for protection to the American Consul, who gave him effective asylum. The Janizaries threateningly demanded the surrender of the German Consul, but Major Noah raised the American flag and defied them. In resisting the attempt to force an entrance to the consular building, Major Noah drew his sword and cut down the son of the Bey. Reinforcements were sent, and the delivery of the German Consul insolently demanded by force of arms. Seeing that resistance would be useless, he surrendered his sword and tore from his coat the gold stripes which indicated his diplomatic office, saying that if the German Consul were arrested, he would also be ar-

* In the Appendix to this sketch there will be found letters from his colleagues at Tunis; also letters from Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and others, proving what high estimate all of these men placed upon the character and ability of Major Noah, and also evidencing, if any such evidence were necessary, what keen-sighted statesmen Jefferson and Adams were. Indeed, the letter of Adams indicates a degree of liberality broader than has generally been credited to him.

rested with him and share his captivity. Accordingly, the two Consuls were led away by their captors, but after a few hours detention were released, the Bey fearing that Decatur, then commanding the American fleet in the Mediterranean, would speedily avenge the wrong. Major Noah was cordially commended by his fellow-consuls for his courage and determination. The fact is, the Bey of Tunis would gladly have had him made away with. This hostility doubtless arose from the fact that Major Noah embraced every possible occasion to denounce the payment of the yearly tribute of \$200,000 which, singular as it may appear from the present standpoint of American power, our Government then paid the Tunisian government for the privilege of permitting our merchant marine to navigate the Mediterranean Sea along the Barbary coast, then infested with piratical Algerian craft. The idea of paying this tribute was abhorrent to Major Noah, who insisted that this money were better expended in building war-ships to attack and batter down the strongholds of these barbarous nations, in accordance with his motto, "millions for defense, but not one cent for tribute." This motto, afterward so completely Americanized, had its true origin with Major Noah. The lamented "Sunset" Cox, in a speech delivered in the House of Representatives, shortly before his death, on the efforts then being made to recognize or incorporate "God" in the Federal Constitution, as an amendment thereto, remarked, "That Mr. Noah had put a quietus upon that proposition as far back as 1813." He, however, did not give the particulars, but as they are highly interesting they may here be narrated in full, the more particularly as they are important not only to the student of constitutional history, but because they relate to an episode which forms a grand

link in the chain of events that mark the development of our institutions.

At the period in question England was at war with both the United States and France. One day an American privateer came into the harbor of Tunis with three English East Indiamen loaded with valuable cargoes, as prizes. These prizes and cargoes were turned over to the American consul to sell at auction. The British Minister protested against such sale on the ground of a clause in the treaty with England which provided that no Christian power should sell a British prize or its cargo in an Algerian port. Major Noah admitted the *bona fides* of the stipulation, but contended that under proper interpretation of national law the United States could not be held to be a Christian nation within the meaning of the treaty and hence was excepted from the inhibition. To prove his contention he exhibited the Constitution of the United States with its manifold provisions against sectarianism and religious tests, and finally cited the Joel Barlow Treaty with Turkey, of 1808, ratified by the United States Senate, which declared that the United States made no objections to Musselmans because of their religion and that they were entitled to and should receive all the privileges of citizens of the most favored nations. This argument was sustained by the Bey and the prizes were accordingly sold in Tunis, and thus became established a principle of international law which has never since been challenged. Major Noah used to remark, jocularly, in discussing this question that the twenty per cent. of proceeds of sale paid to the Bey, as port dues, was doubtless a prominent factor in influencing his decision to allow the prizes to be sold, notwithstanding the protest of the British Minister. But be that as it may, the proposition

was never thereafter questioned by England, nor, indeed, by any other nation. Therefore, the United States, in which no union of church and state exists, and no religious tests of any kind are recognized, is not a Christian nation within the interpretation of the Constitution, and the framers of that great bill of rights, declaring civil and religious liberty, built even better than they knew. Mordecai Manuel Noah, an American Jew, was the first to carry these provisions of the constitution of his country into practical effect from the standpoint of international law.

Returning home in 1819 and taking his residence in New York City, he published an interesting volume recounting his "Travels in England, France, Spain, and the Barbary States," which is said to have been the first book of travel from the pen of an American citizen. In this volume is narrated the story of his ransom of the American prisoners held in slavery by the Algerians; the recital of the unjust treatment received by him at the hand of James Monroe, then Secretary of State, and Richard Rush, Attorney-General; also his correspondence concerning Judaism with Jefferson, John Adams and others. Entering the field of journalism, Major Noah founded the *National Advocate*. He was elected High Sheriff of the city and county of New York in 1822. At that time the law permitted imprisonment for debt, and the yellow fever epidemic, then raging in New York, having broken out in the Debtors' Jail, then situated in the City Hall Park, he threw open the doors of the prison and urged the poor debtors confined therein to save themselves. They quickly fled, and Major Noah was thereby made responsible for their debts. He paid over two hundred thousand dollars

on this account, which completely impoverished him. A bill to reimburse him to that amount was introduced into the New York Legislature, but was defeated through the opposition of Martin Van Buren. This loss was never made good to him, and he required of his children that they should never make any demand for it. As this nation, as is well known, owes the heirs of Haym Solomon a large amount of money, so the State of New York and, indeed, humanity at large, owes Major Noah a debt which money can never discharge. The citizens of New York, without regard to party, appreciating the situation, gave him a benefit at the old Park Theatre at which one of his patriotic dramas, "The Siege of Tripoli," was produced. The theatre was crowded from pit to dome with the most prominent residents of New York and the receipts netted several thousand dollars. The theatre took fire after the performance and burned to the ground, and Major Noah gave the entire proceeds to the actors who had lost their wardrobes in the conflagration.

The *National Advocate* was discontinued and Noah then began the publication of the *New York Enquirer*, which was subsequently merged with the *Courier* and became the *Courier and Inquirer*, in partnership with Col. James Watson Webb, under the firm name of Noah & Webb. This partnership was dissolved in consequence of a political difference between Noah and Webb, the latter declaring in favor of maintaining the United States Bank, while Major Noah sustained President Jackson in removing the government deposits from that institution. The story of this exciting episode of Jackson's administration is in various prints, notably that of "Benton's Thirty Years in the United States Senate." President Jackson appointed Major Noah to the position of surveyor of the

port of New York, the collector being Samuel Swartout, who subsequently defaulted and fled the country.

In 1834 Major Noah established the *Evening Star*, which became the leading Whig organ of the country, and supported William Henry Harrison for President in 1836. Harrison was defeated by Van Buren, but in 1840 he was again nominated and elected over Van Buren. In this contest, that of "Tippecanoe and Tyler too," Mr. Noah took a prominent part for Harrison. William H. Seward, then Governor of New York, appointed Major Noah Judge of the Court of Sessions, a position which he filled with eminent dignity until he resigned because he felt himself incompetent to sit upon the trial for forgery of a certain member of Congress whom he had known from boyhood. He had known the parents of the prisoner, good old Quakers, and the idea of having to sentence the son to the penitentiary in case of conviction was so abhorrent to his kindly nature that he preferred to resign from the bench. The unfortunate man was subsequently convicted and sentenced, and died in the Sing Sing Penitentiary. In 1842 Noah established a daily paper called *The Union*, which was discontinued as a daily after the expiration of President Taylor's administration, and then became a weekly periodical under the title of "*Noah's Sunday Times and Messenger*," which he edited up to the time of his death. This journal obtained a large circulation and was the most influential weekly of its time.

In 1820 Noah undertook a project to re-establish the Jewish nation and form a Jewish state, purchasing Grand Island, on the Niagara River, near Buffalo, (now a celebrated summer resort), on which to locate Jewish emigrants. He erected at White Haven, on the eastern side

of the island, opposite Tonawanda, a monument of brick and wood with the inscription "Aararat, a city of refuge for the Jews, founded by Mordecai Manuel Noah in the month of Tishri, 5586 (September, 1825) and in the Fiftieth year of American independence." The proposed city of refuge was dedicated with impressive ceremonies according to the Jewish rites and all went well until Major Noah discovered and realized that the Jews, being domiciliarians of all nations, could not be assembled on this far-off land at the mere sound of the shofar, and that it would take years and a vast amount of money, even if successfully directed, to gather them from all corners of the earth, and to colonize them on American soil. He found, moreover, that the assimilation of peoples speaking different languages, with different modes of thought, different habits, customs and ideas, could not be accomplished by merger upon the single plane of a common religion. The project was therefore abandoned as impracticable. Major Noah's main idea in thus seeking to establish this city of Jewish refuge was that it would bring the persecuted Jews to a new life and a new home, where they and their posterity would enjoy civil and religious liberty and also contribute to the benefit of the United States by inducing an immigration which would be of great commercial advantage. The American Republic was then hardly more than an experiment and the European press was constantly asserting that our government by the people was a chimera, and could not be realized or maintained for any considerable length of time. To bring the Jews to American shores, with their habits of obedience to law, their great commercial experience and general advancement in the elements of civilization, Major Noah conceived, would

prove of inestimable benefit to the American Republic, then passing through its stage of experimentation.

Major Noah wrote, in addition to his book of travels, a large mass of miscellaneous addresses and essays, political and religious, some of which were reproduced in a volume called "Gleanings from a Gathered Harvest." He also delivered various lectures on Judaism and published a translation of the Book of Jashar, one of the Books excluded from the King James edition of the Bible. He likewise was the author of many plays, among which were the "Fortress of Sorrento," "Paul and Alexis," known afterwards as "The Wandering Boys," "She would be a Soldier, or The Plains of Chippewa," "Marion, or The Hero of Lake George," "The Grecian Captive" and "The Siege of Tripoli." In the palmy days of American patriotism, now seemingly in decadence, the theatres all over the country always produced Major Noah's patriotic plays on the evening of the Fourth of July, the favorites being "She Would be a Soldier" and "Marion, the hero of Lake George."

Major Noah's life, from his youth to his latest years, was pure and one of great mental and physical activity. He was a prominent participant in all public affairs of his day and time, associating intimately with the greatest of Americans, Jefferson, Madison, Jackson, Clay, Cass, Calhoun, Webster, Benton, Silas Wright, and the host of shining lights which in that period illumined the pages of American history. But of all traits which most distinguished his character and marked his career, the greatest was his universal, wide-spread philanthropy and benevolence. The wretched and distressed who came to solicit his aid found his presence as freely as the richest and most powerful. In this particular he was

ever true to the grand teachings and precepts of Judaism. His charity knew no bounds and he had no regard for money except for the necessities of life and the relief it afforded others who were in distress. No one knows and no one can ever know the extent of these charities, for they were sealed hermetically in the recesses of his big, manly heart. As simple as a child, he was the embodiment of moral and physical courage. "*Suaviter in modo fortiter in re.*" His benefactions were not confined to Jews, but were outspread to the world; artists, actors, editors, scholars, artisans, and any one struggling in the world's madding crowd were taken by the hand and helped by Major Noah. Necessarily, he was frequently imposed upon, but he never became weary of well-doing. He was not a believer in human depravity and hence was but too often deceived.

It would burden these pages to detail even a tithe of those acts of Noah's benevolence which became known generally to the public. He was beloved by the Christian clergymen, because of his broad humanitarianism and his purity as a man. No one thought more highly of him than the eminent Catholic divine, the late Bishop Hughes, who frequently sought his advice. His very presence, tall, broad-shouldered and erect, inspired respect. His face literally beamed with the benevolence that irradiated his features. There are men of prominence now living, as well as many that have passed away, both Jews and Christians, who owed their success in life to Noah's assistance and advice. His name and fame were heralded throughout the world, and the Jews in and about Palestine looked to him as their friend and apotheosized him as their benefactor. "*Omnium gentium, facile princeps.*" Indeed, they made him, by decree of the Sanhedrin, a

prince of the House of Israel, or legitimate successor to the rulers, and this was one of his inspiring motives in his scheme for colonization. His humor was keen and human. A laughable incident thereof may be given. When coaches were the only public means of going from one part of the city of New York to the other, he was one day in one of these public conveyances which was, as usual, crowded. A lady hailed the coach from the street; it stopped, and in came a woman of portly figure. The Major promptly said: "My dear madam, you can take a seat on my knee," which she as promptly did and occupied the seat the whole distance, the Major in the meantime talking very pleasantly and jocularly with the lady, to which she, in equally good humor, responded. Everyone in the stage was convulsed with laughter, but the real joke only became apparent when, at the end of the journey, the Major very gallantly extended his arm to the lady and accompanied her away, and it was discovered that the lady was the Major's wife.

Another incident of his humor may be related. While High Sheriff of the County of New York a citizen, small in stature, felt himself agrieved by some official conduct on the part of the Sheriff, and attempted to cow-hide him. Major Noah being a very large, strong man, wrested the cow-hide from his assailant and picking him up bodily, he carried him on his shoulder and deposited his burden in the jail of which he was the custodian, to the amusement and amid the laughter of everybody. His wit was proverbial. When elected High Sheriff, some dissatisfied and bigoted persons remarked that it had come to a pretty pass for a Jew to hang a Christian. "Pretty Christian, forsooth, who deserves hanging," retorted Major Noah, and this rejoinder silenced the objectors.

Mr. Evert A. Duyckinck, editor of the *Literary World*, and author of the "Encyclopedia of American Literature," now deceased, published an article in the *Literary World*, under the caption of "Which was the Jew and Which was the Christian?" Briefly stated, this article narrated the story of himself, a poor young man of literary ability, stranded in New York City, who sought the assistance of two leading editors in an endeavor to sell his manuscript. He was rudely repulsed by one man, and as a last resort applied to the other without the remotest hope of success. Upon explaining his errand, and making known his great pecuniary necessities, this latter asked him to be seated, took his manuscript, turned his back and glanced through it. Finally he tied the manuscript carefully with a piece of tape, and turning to the young man, said: "You certainly possess literary ability of a high order and deserve success. Daily newspapers cannot publish this character of literature for want of space, but be careful of your manuscript; bring it to me early next week, and possibly I may find a purchaser for it." The young man, not prepared for this surprise, expressed his gratitude and left with a happy heart. When he reached his humble lodging he untied the manuscript and from it fluttered a twenty dollar bill. It was indeed a god-send, and he then understood why the editor had tied the roll of manuscript so carefully. He came back at the appointed time, and sure enough, the manuscript had been sold, netting \$50, which, it afterward proved, the editor had paid out of his own pocket. From that day the young man's success in the field of literature was assured. The article closed as follows: "Which was the benefactor, the Jew or the Christian? Nine hundred and ninety-nine out of a thousand would say that it was the Jew who repulsed

and the Christian who was the benefactor, yet in this instance it was the Christian who repulsed and the Jew was the benefactor. That Jew was Major Mordecai Manuel Noah, and the young man he then befriended is now the editor of this paper and author of this article."

On one occasion, a cold, bitter, wintry morning, Major Noah was walking up Broadway above Chambers Street, then the location of the large retail dry goods stores. Standing on the pavement, before one of these establishments, was a little girl, clad in rags, and crying. The tears were freezing on her wan and pallid cheeks. "Great heavens!" ejaculated Major Noah, as he glanced at the waif, "here is a child freezing to death in the streets of a Christian city, and no one succors." Seizing the child by the hand he rushed into the store, crying, "Shame upon you, gentlemen, to let this poor child perish at your very door! Take her to the stove and permit the poor creature to warm herself!" Everybody knew Major Noah, and his word was a command. Clerks took the child in hand and after she had been warmed sufficiently, Major Noah said: "Order a carriage; I will take the child home with me." A large crowd had meanwhile collected, the carriage came, and just as he started to take the child to it, a well-known New York sporting character came through the crowd, and, placing his hand on Major Noah's shoulder, said: "You do more than your share of this sort of thing. Let me take the child. While I am a gambler, you know me well, and know also that I possess an ample fortune. I promise you on my word of honor as a man I will take this child, rear her tenderly, away from all evil, and be her benefactor and father. Please let me have my wish." Major Noah looked at him for an instant, and realized

that he was terribly in earnest. Placing the child's hand in his, he said: "Sam Suydam, I will take your promise, and God help you if you break it. This is a great responsibility, and I commit this child to you as you demand." The child was taken off in the carriage by Suydam. He was true to his word; he raised the child as his own, as he had promised. She grew to beautiful womanhood without knowing or suspecting that she had been rescued from death in the streets of a so-called Christian city, nor that her benefactors were Major Noah and Sam Suydam, the gambler. Major Noah kept himself well advised of the well-being of the child until his death, and when she married a reputable gentleman, Suydam gave her a wedding portion of \$40,000. How little the world knows of what transpires in it! Here was the misunderstood Jew, and with him the ostracised gambler, performing a great act of real charity, for which neither claimed credit, both concealing from public knowledge what they had done, but He on High has registered this as well as a thousand other acts which make the whole world kin.

Major Noah was President of the Jewish Charity Organization of New York City, and when that was merged into a B'nai B'rith lodge he was its first President. His house was a constant asylum; the poor Jews, arriving here, unable to speak the English language, sought him before all others. He fed and clothed and secured credit for them, starting out hundreds peddling over the country. It is stated that only in two instances was he ever left to pay the debt for which he had become security, and these defaulters never showed their faces to him again. Several of his beneficiaries were thus enabled to begin the foundations of great fortunes. Major Noah was the last Jew that was buried within the limits of

New York City. To recount all those whose success in the various pursuits of life was largely due to Major Noah would be to make a list whose name is legion. He was a man among men, a Jew among Jews, an honor to his country and his race, but, above all, he was an American, proud of his nativity and attached to the free institutions of his country. The Constitution was his shibboleth—the very breath of his nostrils. What was nearest his heart was that every Jew, nay, indeed, every Christian in the land, should appreciate the great value of a government, the keystone of whose arch is *civil and religious liberty*.

The epitaph graven on his tomb was written by his friend and follower, Cornelius Matthews, one of the foremost of the national literati, a man whom Major Noah had assisted to climb the ladder of journalistic fame. It reads as follows: “The warm hand is cold, the kindly eye is dim, the generous heart has ceased to beat, for beneath this monument lie the mortal remains of Mordecai Manuel Noah, born in Philadelphia, July 19, 1785, died in New York, March 22, 1851.”

As an interesting fact it may be noted that at the wedding of Major Noah’s father, General Washington attended and signed the Kesuba. Washington was a warm friend of Robert Phillips, and Major Noah’s father served temporarily as an aide-de-camp on his staff.

Major Noah, as is abundantly proven in his editorials, foresaw the Civil War, and advocated the abolition of slavery by laws, gradual in their effect; and had he, in common with other farseeing statesmen, been heeded, the Civil War with all its horrors would have become impossible.

APPENDIX I.

The letter of recall which Commodore Stephen Decatur handed to Major Noah and which is alluded to in the sketch, read in part as follows :

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
April 25, 1815.

SIR: At the time of your appointment as Consul at Tunis it was not known that the religion which you profess would form any obstacle to the exercise of your consular functions, *in consequence of which the President has deemed it expedient to revoke your commission.*

Your obedient servant,

JAMES MONROE.

On the above letter Noah comments as follows in book of Travels :

"I paused to reflect on its contents. I was at a loss to account for its strange and unprecedented tenor. My religion an object of hostility? I thought I was a citizen of the United States, protected by the constitution in my religious as well as my civil rights. My religion was known to the Government at the time of my appointment, and it constituted one of the prominent causes why I was sent to Barbary. If, then, any unfavorable events had been created by my religion they should have been first ascertained, and not, acting upon a supposition, upon imaginary consequences, have thus violated one of the most sacred and delicate rights of an American citizen. Admitting, then, that my religion had produced an unfavorable effect, no official notice should have been

taken of it; I could have been recalled without placing on file a letter thus hostile to the spirit and character of our institutions. But my religion was not known in Barbary; from the moment of my landing, I had been in the full possession of my Consular functions, respected and feared by the government, and enjoying the esteem and good-will of every resident. What injury could my religion create? I lived like other Consuls; the flag of the United States was displayed on Sundays and Christian holidays; the Catholic Priest who came into my house to sprinkle holy water and pray, was received with deference, and freely allowed to perform his pious purpose; the bare-footed Franciscan, who came to beg, received alms in the name of Christ; the Greek Bishop, who sent to me a decorated branch of palm on Palm Sunday, received in return a customary donation; the poor slaves, when they wanted a favor, came to me; the Jews alone asked nothing. Why, then, am I to be persecuted for my religion? Although no religious principles are known to the constitution, no peculiar worship connected with the government, yet I did not forget that I was representing the United States. What was the opinion of Joel Barlow when writing a treaty for one of the Barbary States? Let the following article, confirmed by the United States Senate, answer: "Article 11th.—As the government of the United States of America is not, in any sense, founded on the Christian religion, as it has, in itself, no character of enmity against the laws, religion, or tranquility of Musselmans; and as the said states never have entered into any war, or act of hostility against any Mohamedan nation, it is declared by the parties, that no pretext arising from religious principles shall ever produce an interruption of the harmony exist-

ing between the two countries." If President Madison was unacquainted with this article in the treaty which, in effect, is equally binding in all the States of Barbary, he should have remembered that the religion of a citizen is not a legitimate object of official notice from the government; and even admitting that my religion was an obstacle, and there is no doubt that it was not, are we prepared to yield the admirable and just institutions of our country at the shrine of foreign bigotry and superstition? Are we prepared to disfranchise one of our citizens to gratify the intolerant views of the Bey of Tunis? Has it come to this, that the noble character of the most illustrious republic on earth, celebrated for its justice, and the sacred character of its institutions, is to be sacrificed at the behest of a Barbary pirate? Have we then fallen so low? What would have been the consequences had the Bey known and objected to my religion? He would have learned from me, in language too plain to be misunderstood, that whoever the United States commissions as their representative, he must receive and respect, if his conduct is proper; on that subject I could not have permitted a word to be said. If such a principle is attempted to be established it will lay the foundation for the most unhappy and most dangerous disputes. Foreign nations will dictate to us the religion which our officers at their courts should profess. Now, after having braved the perils of the ocean, residing in a barbarous country without family or relatives, supporting the rights of the nation, hazarding my life from poison and the stiletto, I find my own government sacrificing my credit, violating my rights, insulting my feelings and the religious feelings of a whole nation. Oh, shame! shame!! The course which men of refined or delicate feelings

should have pursued, had there been grounds, was an obvious one. The President should have instructed the Secretary of State to have recalled me, and to have said that the causes should be made known to me on my return. The letter that I received should never have been written, and above all, should never have been put on file. But it is not true that my religion either had or would have produced injurious effects. The Bey of Algiers had appointed a Jew his minister at the court of France; another consul at Marseilles; another at Leghorn. The Treasurer, the interpreter, the Commercial Agent of the Bey at Constantinople, are Jews. In the year 1811 the British government sent Aaron Cordoza, of Gibraltar, a most intelligent and respectable Jew, with a sloop of war to Algiers to negotiate some important point connected with commerce. He was received with deference and succeeded. The first minister from Portugal to Morocco was Abraham Sasportas, a Jew, who formed a treaty and was received with open arms. Ali Bey, of Tunis, sent as ambassador to London Moses Massias, the father of Major Massias, who is at present serving in the army of the United States. Innumerable instances could be produced where the Musselmans have preferred employing a Jew on foreign missions, and had any important dispute arisen requiring power and influence to adjust, my religion should have been known, and my success would have been certain; but I had sufficient power and respect, more than have ever been enjoyed by any Consul before me, and none who succeeds me will ever possess a greater share. It is not necessary for a citizen of the United States to have his faith stamped on his forehead; the name of freeman is a sufficient passport, and my government should have

supported me—should have defended my rights—and should not have themselves assailed them. There was something insufferably little in adding the weight of the American government, in violation of the wishes and institutions of the people, to crush a race of which many had fought and bled for American independence, and many had assisted to elevate those very men who had thus treated their rights with indelicate oppression. Unfortunate people, whose faith and constancy alone have been the cause of so much tyranny and oppression, who have given moral laws to the world and who received for reward opprobrium and insult. After this what nation may not oppress them?”

“That the subject of religion should ever have commanded the official notice of the Government of the United States cannot fail to create the greatest surprise, when a reference is had to the Constitution of the United States, and equally so to the enlightened state of the times. In the war for independence the Jews were unanimous in their jealous co-operation, and we find them holding a high rank in the army, and fighting for liberty with a gallantry worthy of the descendants of Joshua, David and the Maccabees. After the adoption of the Constitution we see them on the benches as judges, in the legislatures as members and assisting the government in gloomy periods to regulate and strengthen the financial system. In all the relations of life as fathers, husbands, and citizens, I persuade myself that they yield to no sect, and they have ever been distinguished for their liberal sentiments towards every denomination of Christians. In the late war* we find many Jews in the ranks as soldiers and holding commissions. We hear of them

* War of 1812.

wounded severely in the battles at the north, and gallantly supporting their country in the south. Surely, it is not too much to expect that under all these circumstances the officers of government will conform to the wishes of the people and treat them with a delicacy becoming freemen.

I herewith subjoin copies of letters addressed from three Presidents of the United States to me, in acknowledgment of an historical discourse respecting the Jews.

Copy of a letter from Thomas Jefferson, Esq., dated,

MONTICELLO, May 28th, 1818.

SIR,—I thank you for the discourse on the consecration of the Synagogue in your city, with which you have been pleased to favor me. I have read it with pleasure and instruction, having learnt from it some valuable facts in Jewish history which I did not know before. Your sect, by its sufferings, has furnished a remarkable proof of the universal spirit of religious intolerance inherent in every sect, disclaimed by all while feeble, and practiced by all when in power. Our laws have applied the only antidote to this vice, protecting our religious as they do our civil rights, by putting all on an equal footing. But more remains to be done, for although we are free by law, we are not so in practice; public opinion erects itself into an inquisition, and exercises its office with as much fanaticism as fans the flames of an *Auto da fe*. The prejudice still scowling on your section of our religion, although the elder one, cannot be unfelt by yourselves; it is to be hoped that individual dispositions will at length mould themselves to the model of the law and consider the moral basis on which all our religions rest, as a rallying point which unites them in a common interest; while the peculiar dogmas branching from it are the exclusive concern of the respective sects embracing them, and no rightful subject of notice to any other; public opinion needs reformation on that point, which would have the other further happy effect of doing away the hypocritical maxim of "*Intus et lubet, foris ut moris.*" Nothing, I think, would be so likely to effect this, as to your sect particularly, as the more careful attention to education, which you recommend, and which, placing its members on the equal and commanding benches of

science, will exhibit them as equal objects of respect and favor. I salute you with great respect and esteem.

(Signed) THOMAS JEFFERSON.

M. M. NOAH, Esq.

Copy of a letter from James Madison, Esq., on the same subject, dated,

MONTPELIER, May 15, 1818.

SIR,—I have received your letter of the 6th with the eloquent discourse delivered at the consecration of the Synagogue. Having ever regarded the freedom of religious opinion and worship as equally belonging to every sect, and the secure enjoyment of it as the best human provision for bringing all either into the same way of thinking, or into that mutual charity which is the only proper substitute, I observe with pleasure the view you give of the spirit in which your sect partake of the common blessings afforded by our Government and laws.

As your foreign mission took place whilst I was in the Administration, it cannot but be agreeable to me to learn that your accounts have been closed in a manner so favorable to you. And I know too well the justice and candor of the present Executive to doubt that an official preservation will be readily allowed to explanations necessary to protect your character against the effect of any impressions whenever ascertained to be erroneous. It was certain that your religious profession was well known at the time you received your commission, and that, in itself, could not be a motive in your recall.

(Signed) JAMES MADISON.

Copy of a letter from John Adams, Esq., dated,

QUINCY, July 31, 1818.

SIR,—Accept my best thanks for your polite and obliging favour of the 24th and especially for the Discourse inclosed. I know not when I have read a more liberal or a more elegant composition.

You have not extended your ideas of the right of private judgment and the liberty of conscience, both in religion and philosophy, farther than I do. Mine are limited only by morals and propriety.

I have had occasion to be acquainted with several gentlemen of your nation, and to transact business with some of them, whom I found to be

men of as liberal minds, as much honor, probity, generosity and good breeding, as any I have known in any sect of religion or philosophy.

I wish your nation may be admitted to all the privileges of citizens in every country of the world. This country has done much. I wish it may do more, and annul every narrow idea in religion, government and commerce. Let the wits joke; the philosophers sneer! What then? It has pleased the Providence of the "first cause," the universal cause, that Abraham should give religion, not only to Hebrews, but to Christians and Mahometans, the greatest part of the modern civilized world.

(Signed) JOHN ADAMS.

APPENDIX II.

ADDITIONAL EXTRACTS FROM NOAH'S BOOK OF TRAVELS.

“The following letters were written and transmitted to me, prior to my leaving Tunis, by the public functionaries in that kingdom. Although they served to accompany the passports which were necessary for me to have in passing through Europe on my return home, still, I can consider them in no other light than private communications. I have no permission, nor can I possibly obtain it, from those gentlemen, to give these letters to the world. The consuls, however, were acquainted with every public measure of mine of any importance; and my domestic character was not unknown to them. It is to their benevolence I now appeal for forgiveness in presuming to take the freedom I do with their names.

Copy of a letter from Richard Oglander, Esq., his Britannic Majesty's agent and Consul-General, near the Bey and Regency of Tunis, dated,

SEPTEMBER 19, 1815.

MY DEAR SIR,—I hasten to acknowledge the receipt of the letter with which you honored me this morning, for the purpose of acquainting me with your intended departure from this place, with the first convenient opportunity.

I flatter myself you will be persuaded this intelligence to me, as I doubt not it will be to the rest of your colleagues and friends here, is most unwelcome, and occasions me very sincere regret; for no one, I assure you, my dear sir, can entertain a more lively sense, or true esteem, for your many valuable and amiable qualities than I do. However, at the same time that I must be allowed, in common with the rest of your friends, to express my regret at your approaching de-

parture, inasmuch as it will occasion us the loss of an honorable and estimable colleague, yet I cannot but congratulate you, on your being about to quit this miserable country, the embroils of its court, &c.

I beg you will accept my most cordial good wishes for your prosperity and happiness, and for a safe and pleasant return to your native country ; and that you will believe me to remain, with the highest esteem and regard,

My dear sir, your most faithful and obedient servant,

(Signed) RICHARD OGLANDER.

With regard to the passport which you desire, if you will do me the favor to send me a draft of such a one as you think will be useful to you, I will take care to have it prepared for you without loss of time.

To MAJOR NOAH,

Consul-General of the United States of America.

Translation of a note from the Chevalier Devoise, Consul-General and Chargé d'Affairs for France, dated,

TUNIS, September 19, 1815.

MY DEAR MR. NOAH,—Never have I delivered a passport more against my inclination than the one which I have the honor herewith to enclose, because it announces that you are going to leave us, when I had promised myself to spend many agreeable moments in your society. Scarce has our acquaintance commenced when you depart and leave me nothing but regret. Nevertheless, I must wish you a good voyage, and all the happiness you merit. Permit me to add the expression of my attachment and most distinguished consideration.

I have the honor to be, &c.

(Signed) DEVOISE.

Translation of a note from Don Arnoldo Soler, Consul-General of his Catholic Majesty in Tunis.

MY DEAR SIR,—Enclosed I remit you the passport you desire. Although the opportunity enables me to demonstrate my disposition to comply with your request, it is, nevertheless, painful to be separated from a colleague and friend so estimable as yourself.

Until I have the satisfaction to reiterate, in person, the sentiments of my sincere esteem, I pray God to preserve you many years.

(Signed) ARNOLDO SOLER.

TUNIS, SEPTEMBER 20, 1815.

To MAJOR NOAH,
Consul General of the United States.

Translation of a letter from the Chevalier de Martino, Consul-General of his Majesty the King of the Two Sicilies.

TUNIS, September 20, 1815.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I have been extremely surprised to hear by your letter that you were determined to leave Tunis. Only the circumstance of my intending to do the same in a few days, makes me feel less unhappy by the absence of a friend, a colleague, and so agreeable a neighbor. Your stay in this place, although short, was sufficient to give the highest opinion of your talents, and penetration in the exercise of your office. Be assured we all appreciate your merits. Your government certainly ought to listen to the voice of justice, and I do not doubt but that my expectations will be accomplished. I wish you a prosperous voyage, and hope to see you in my country, where I shall be able to give you proofs of my friendship and gratitude. Adieu, my friend; remember me always, and rest assured that I shall be forever your sincere friend.

(Signed) RENATO DE MARTINO

MR. NOAH,
Consul of the United States.

Copy of a letter from Andrew C. Gierliew, Esquire, his Danish Majesty's Consul-General.

TUNIS, September 19, 1815.

Need I tell you, my highly esteemed friend, how sincerely I am afflicted at your departure? My good Mr. Martino, too, will leave me soon, and then I shall be alone, quite alone, in this unhappy country. But I cannot otherwise than highly approve of your firm, manly, and honorable conduct, after what has passed. I always esteemed your

character, and it is, and will be a consolation to me in this dreary place, where honor, virtue, and character are the most shocking vices a mortal can possess, to have gained such a friend, I hope for life, and wherever we shall live, as you, my most valued Mr. Noah. Be then as happy, my most sincerely esteemed friend, as you certainly deserve, and as I wish you from all my heart; and let us meet soon again in a less unhappy country, where virtue, honor, and manly open character, are not vices. We shall always meet as friends, and we will dare to say that we lived and acted like men of honor. Remember me as I shall always remember you. Be a friend of my friends, as I shall always be of yours, if they resemble you. Be a friend of my country, as I always was of yours. I send you the passport you require. It is an honor for me to give it to you.

Your sincerely devoted friend,

(Signed) GIERLIEW.

M. M. NOAH, Esq.,

Consul of the United States.

Extract of a letter from Richard B. Jones, Esq., Consul of the United States at Tripoli, dated,

JULY 31, 1815.

I shall always consider it my duty to communicate frequently and freely my sentiments, my opinions, and conduct, to the representatives of our country, whenever an occasion presents; but that duty becomes a pleasure in addressing you, sir, who have displayed a zeal and firmness unequalled in defence of our rights; reasoned wisely, and acted courageously; and who has beguiled many of my tedious moments in Tripoli by your friendly and invaluable correspondence.

Be assured that in me you will always find a person disposed to go every length to serve my country and countrymen; and if we can, by our mutual efforts, serve the common cause, we shall not only have effected the object of our mission, but enjoy the pleasing satisfaction of having performed our duty *when we stood alone*.

VINDICATION.

As already stated, Major Noah was charged with being short in his accounts. The following letter from the Department of State, January 14, 1817, will conclusively prove the falsity of the accusation.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, January 14, 1817.

SIR,—Your account as Consul of the United States at Tunis has been adjusted at this Department in conformity of the opinion of the Attorney-General of the 30th of December last, of which you have a copy; and a balance of five thousand two hundred and sixteen dollars fifty-seven cents, reported to be due you will be paid to your order, at any time after Congress shall have made the necessary appropriations. A sum of one thousand six hundred and sixty-four dollars, besides a charge of thirty-five per cent. loss on the disbursement of your agent at Algiers, is suspended, for reasons mentioned in the account, of which you have been apprised.

I am, sir, respectfully your obedient servant,

(Signed) S. PLEASANTON.

MORDECAI M. NOAH, Esq.

The comments on the above by Major Noah are extremely interesting and are as follows:

“Thus ended my connection with the Government, and thus fell to the ground the charge “of going beyond orders;” nothing, then, remained of the official charge but my religion, a subject which I had reason to believe the President would have reconciled in a suitable manner, but which, after three years’ delay, has not commanded his attention.

“If I have occupied too much space in this work with recapitulating my official concerns, the reader will bear

in mind that this is the first attempt since the adoption of the Constitution of the United States to make the religion of a citizen the objection to the possession of office; a principle so foreign to the Constitution, so much at war with the genius and disposition of the people, and so dangerous to the liberties of the country, that citizens cannot be insensible to the new and dreadful features which it exposes; none can hear with indifference this measure of the Government, and none will turn a deaf ear to the representations of an individual who has sustained an injury. Governments have a natural propensity to encroach upon the rights of citizens, and if those rights are worthy of being preserved, the utmost caution should be used to guard them with a vigilance that never slumbers. If a letter such as I received in Barbary had been written by order of a sovereign, presuming that a king could do such a wrong, I would have submitted to it without a murmur, knowing the tenure by which I held my office; but my fellow-citizen, the President, to disfranchise me from holding the office of Consul at Tunis when I am eligible to the station which he holds, cannot be viewed but as an assumption of power neither known or tolerated. Nothing is easier than to establish a principle in governments and nothing is more difficult than to destroy this principle when it is found to be dangerous. My letter of recall has become a document on file at the Department of State, which hereafter may, without the present explanations, go to disfranchise a whole nation. I felt it to be my duty to clear up this affair, and as I caused my country to be respected abroad, it was not anticipating too much when I claimed a reciprocal respect and protection from the Government.

“I had heard it rumoured that Colonel Lear was the

prominent cause of that letter having been written to me; he is now dead, and I have only to express my astonishment at the extraordinary and mysterious influence which he exercised over the Administration. I, however, subsequently gave Mr. Monroe an opportunity to do that justice which I flattered myself he was disposed to do, by requesting that I might be restored to an appointment of equal rank; but no notice was taken of my application. I had no objections to make. The conferring of appointments is a power correctly vested in the Executive; if he thinks proper to exercise that right in accordance with his own feelings, in advancement of his own views, in support of his own attachments or prejudices, it may be lamented for the sake of the public service, but cannot be prevented; the check in the Senate is all that the Constitution provides; still it is expected that the Executive, chosen for a transitory period by the people, will in all cases consult what is most acceptable to the people and creditable to the country.

“It is not necessary for me to say that Mr. Monroe is emphatically an honest man. I measure men by the aggregate of their virtues and vices—all are liable to error—many pertinaciously adhere to their measures though they may be manifestly erroneous; and such is the imperfection of our natures, that when a wrong is done, intentionally or accidentally, a second wrong is frequently added in confirmation of the first if complaint is made or clamour heard. Still, with these errors, the balance is greatly in favor of the President for past services, sincere attachment to country and strict integrity; he has his weak points like other men. When these do not affect the public service or go to establish dangerous doc-

trines, they are not necessary objects of inquiry; but recurring to the first principles of our Government, there is nothing which will tend more securely to preserve our liberties than freedom of speech and the press, a scrutiny into public measures, and a firm but respectful tone to men in power.

“Mr. Monroe regretted the steps which he had pursued towards me—there was an idea floating on his mind that I had not been well treated, but he only regretted it as it affected him; he had no consideration for my feelings, for my rights or character; he would have been pleased to have arranged the affair in a manner mutually agreeable, but I had not presented myself with that submissive tone, with that “bondsmen key and bated breath” that he probably expected; he said I threatened to appeal to Congress; he should have been proud to have seen a citizen thus anxious to support his rights and character, and he should have aided, not opposed me, not bent the power of government to crush an individual.

“I have said this much in proof to political opponents, that I am under no obligation to Mr. Monroe, that my support of the Administration is grounded on principle, on nobler motives than personal favours, and as long as he is in the Administration, and his measures are calculated to promote the honour and prosperity of our country, so long will I support him. I have no favours to ask or prejudices to indulge; I have considered it my duty not to labour under suspicions or insinuations, and thus have endeavoured to explain them.

“ ‘The evil which men do lives after them,
The good is oft interred with their bones.’

“The subject of our public credit abroad is of material

importance to the preservation of our national character, interest and rights. An erroneous idea prevails in the Government that the protest of a bill of exchange drawn by an officer on a foreign station cannot impair the public credit, and if a doubt exists as to the power of the officer or his instructions to draw upon the Government, his bills are protested without ceremony and without any intention to affect his credit or injure his prospects. This is subjecting the nation to loss, to injury of credit, and a charge of bad faith; and while our coffers are overflowing, while our means are more than ample to meet every public exigency, our foreign credit will be on the worst footing, and our officers will be backward in affording indispensable facilities to the Government. It is of less consequence if payment of bills is suspended, which are drawn in the United States, for the parties being on the spot can always explain; but this advantage is not possessed by an officer on a foreign station—his bills may be received and his advices lost; a just and liberal construction of power and authority should always prevail, if not on behalf of the officer, then on behalf of the nation, on behalf of our character and credit.”

APPENDIX III.

Major Noah's father, Manuel Mordecai Noah, died at New York in 1825, and was buried in the old Jewish Cemetery on Oliver Street. His headstone now forms a portion of the street wall on William Street which was opened through to Chatham Square about 1850. Major Noah's ancestors were originally refugees from the Spanish Inquisition, and included the families of Nunez and Machado. One branch of the family found refuge in France, which gave asylum to the Jewish fugitives from Spain; another branch located in Holland, which country also received them kindly; and still another branch located in England. The French refugees took the name of Noel, and a descendant of that branch was Minister of Public Instruction under the provisional government following the abdication of King Louis Philippe. Major Noah's ancestors emigrated to the American Colonies in 1733 with Governor Oglethorpe, settling at Savannah, Georgia, then part of the Carolinas, and their names are found in the archives of that city among the first settlers. It is stated as a tradition that one of the female members of the emigrating family, then very aged, had both thumbs broken and lacerated from the effect of the thumb-screw, having been thus tortured when a girl by the inquisitors.

When Major Noah visited London, in 1813, as a paroled prisoner of war, he accidentally met, at a theatre, a young British officer, whose remarkable likeness to the Noah family attracted his attention. Upon introducing himself to the officer he discovered his name to be Noel,

and that he was his cousin. In 1831 Lady Amelia Noel, another cousin, then one of the maids in waiting upon Queen Charlotte, visited Major Noah, at New York, and passed several weeks in America.

The Machado family were of noble extraction, their immediate ancestor having been a Grandee of Spain, under the Moorish Kings, when the Jews of that period were the leaders in sciences, letters and the arts, and contributed largely, as is attested by history, to the grandeur of Spain under the reign of the Moorish Kings. That period produced Maimonides, the greatest Jewish law-giver of the age, and one of the trio of Israelites named in order of greatness as marking successive epochs—Moses of old, Moses Ben Maimon and Moses Mendelsohn. Samuel Noah, of Virginia, a first cousin of Major Noah, was graduated from the Military Academy at West Point in the class of 1806, and distinguished himself by gallantry during the war of 1812. At the time of his death, in 1873, at the ripe age of ninety, he was by many years the oldest surviving graduate of West Point. John Moss, of Virginia, who was the first private secretary of President John Tyler, was also a first cousin of Major Noah, his mother having been a sister of Major Noah's father.

Major Noah was the president of the "Old Bachelor's Club" of New York City, an organization composed mainly of prominent gentlemen, the *élite* of the old Knickerbocker families, and which, in its day and time, was the foremost social organization of that metropolis. The shibboleth of this club was positive and perpetual celibacy. Judge of the consternation of its membership when, in 1826, its president married Miss Rebecca Esther Jackson, a Jewess renowned alike for her amiable

qualities and personal beauty. The club at once disbanded and was never reorganized, many of its leading members concluding to follow the matrimonial example.

The fruit of this union was six sons and one daughter, Manuel M., Jacob J., Robert P., Zipporah, Daniel J., Henry and Lionel J. Noah. Of these only Jacob J., Robert P., and Lionel J. survive. The eldest son, Manuel M., was a journalist and author of considerable reputation, whose field of literary success was at San Francisco, California, where, for twenty years, he was the chief editor of the *Alta California*.

Jacob J., Robert P. and Lionel J. Noah are lawyers and counsellors of the Supreme Court of the United States, the former resident at Washington, and the two latter at New York City. Henry Noah resided in South Carolina and was prominent in the Republican control of that State, where he held the office of Collector of U. S. Internal Revenue for several years. He was a delegate to the Republican National Conventions of 1872, 1876, 1880 and 1884. He served in the War of the Rebellion as an officer of the Thirty-seventh New York Volunteers.

Zipporah married Mr. Charles L. Lawrence, a merchant of New York City. Both she and her husband have recently deceased. Daniel J. died in boyhood from the results of an accidental injury.

Jacob J. Noah located in Minnesota when the territorial organization was formed, and filled acceptably various judicial and legislative preferments. In 1857 he declined the nomination for Delegate in Congress to accept the position of Clerk of the Supreme Court of the State, to which office he was elected by a large majority. He served during the war as an officer in the Second Minnesota Infantry, the regiment which contributed so largely

to the military fame of Gen. George H. Thomas in winning the first victory of the Union arms, the battle of Mill Springs, Ky.

After the war he located in Tennessee, where he was foremost among the leaders of the reconstruction movement and the adoption of the free State Constitution of 1865. He was appointed by Governor Brownlow one of the Attorneys-General and Chancellors of the State, and as Attorney-General successfully prosecuted the impeachment of Judge Frazier, who was impeached for attempting judicially to prevent the assembling of a quorum of the Tennessee Legislature, convened to ratify or reject the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. Judge Noah holds the Medal of Honor conferred by the famous Seventh Regiment of New York for long and faithful military service, besides the insignia of the Society of the Army of the Cumberland, Grand Army of the Republic, and other organizations of like military character. At present he is a member of the U. S. Board of Pension Appeals, which, under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, passes judicially as the court of last resort upon all appeals from the action of the Commissioner of Pensions in granting or rejecting claims for pensions and bounty lands. He is prominent in political, Masonic and journalistic circles at Washington, and a member of the famous "Gridiron Club."

The career of Robert P. Noah has been remarkably adventurous. He served in the Mexican War as a mere youth, and went to California with Colonel Stevenson's regiment of occupation, which was dispatched to San Francisco around Cape Horn. He accompanied Gen. George B. McClellan, then a Captain of Engineers, to Vancouver at the time of the boundary dispute with

Great Britain, and assisted in locating and surveying the boundary line between the United States and the British possessions.

Upon the breaking out of the Crimean War he joined the British forces as a volunteer aide-de-camp to Lord Raglan, and served throughout that memorable campaign, receiving a score or more of medals and decorations, conferred for conspicuous bravery upon the survivors of that war. In 1857 President Buchanan appointed him U. S. Naval Agent at Rio Janiero, which position he held until 1862, when the naval depot there was abandoned in consequence of the Civil War. Upon the defection to the Confederacy of Richard Kidder Meade, then our Minister to Brazil, who hauled down the American flag, young Noah took possession of the Legation building and United States property, re-hoisted the flag of his country, and sought to arrest Mr. Meade for treason; the latter, however, managed to escape.

Returning to the United States, Noah studied law, was admitted to practice, and, for ten years, was one of the Corporation Attorneys of New York, preferring that position to a seat in Congress, the nomination for which he declined in 1882, although such nomination was then equivalent to an election.

Lionel J. Noah studied law with Mr. Henry Morrison, of New York, a leading lawyer of the Jewish faith, was admitted to practice, and has always followed that profession, declining to hold any political or other office. He has attained reputation as a "case" and office lawyer.

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MORDECAI MANUEL NOAH

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